

of him, and in this respect he is the incarnation of a fierce and contentious age. There is no quarter for the enemy, and in this wordy warfare vituperation is as legitimate a weapon as argument. Did he not indeed assert that it is not enough to pray well; the Christian must also learn to swear well. "When I say, 'Hallowed be Thy name,' I curse Erasmus and all who are against Thy word." The expletives he applies to his enemies would form a dictionary of themselves. The Psalms and the biographies of the saints are meek by comparison. He is superlative in the art of *scJimpfen*, scolding, although he has had many competitors in a nation in which the art seems to be innate. It was in fact not peculiar to him or to Germany in this forcible age. His antagonists could give as good as they got, and the reformers everywhere were not distinguished for the sweetness of their tempers or the moderation of their language.

Two months later came another blast against the Roman Jericho in the shape of "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church." It is written in Latin, and is not so outrageous in tone, but it is even more revolutionary than its predecessor. It attacked the sacramental superstition which invested the priesthood, the hierarchy, with a subtle tyranny over the soul. It struck a vital part, for the power of the mediaeval Church rested on the sacraments. By the sacraments she enthralled the life of man. Of the seven sacraments Luther would retain two, or at most three—baptism, the Lord's Supper, and perhaps penitence—and these only because they were divinely instituted. The rest are priestly contrivances to keep the soul in bondage. And the Lord's Supper is by no means synonymous with the mass—that fable of a miracle-working priesthood, imagined in the ages of crassest ignorance, and foisted on the world as the teaching of Christ. In the Scriptures, on the other hand, there is no transubstantiation, and no hierarchy distinct from the body of Christian believers. "In the matter of the mass and the sacrament we are all equal, priests and laymen." It is faith and not rite that makes a man a Christian. And yet the pope and the hierarchy have for several centuries held the world in bondage by such cunningly devised doctrines. See ye not, ye German simpletons, he cries in effect, that ye are the slaves, the